

JIM DAVIS
11th DISTRICT, FLORIDA

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

COMMITTEE ON
HOUSE ADMINISTRATION

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ORIGINAL
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0911

August 5, 1999

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Mr. William Kennard
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20554

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SEP 20 1999

Dear Chairman Kennard:

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Enclosed please find a copy of a letter I recently received from Mr. James Heck, a constituent of mine from Tampa, Florida.

As you will note, Mr. Heck is particularly concerned with a proposal by the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) that would permit licensing of low power FM (LPFM) transmitters throughout the country. Mr. Heck believes that this may cause serious technical problems with the existing licensed FM stations throughout the country. I believe the issues Mr. Heck raises are important and would appreciate any information the Commission might provide to respond to his direct concerns regarding the impact of this proposal.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this matter and if you have any questions or require additional information please feel free to contact me or Duane Wright of my staff at 225-3376.

Sincerely,

Jim Davis

Jim Davis
Member of Congress

JOD:dow

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wusf 89.7fm
YOUR COMMUNITY STATION

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June 7, 1999

Honorable Jim Davis
U.S. House of Representatives
418 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Washington DC 20515

766030
FM 1
D-1
Date Received 6/11/99
8/4

Dear Jim:

The purpose of this letter is to bring to your attention a very serious problem for your Public Radio stations in the Tampa Bay region and throughout Florida. The FCC currently has under consideration an order that would permit licensing of a large number of low-power FM (LPFM) transmitters throughout the country. These transmitters would only be available for allocation to organizations that currently hold no radio broadcast licenses. These new stations, if established, are conceived for the purpose of giving more voice to the perceived underserved and unheard voices of the community.

From a pragmatic political point of view, this plan may appear to be an attractive idea. In addition, it might have the benefit of eliminating the so-called "pirate" FM stations which regularly spring up, particularly in major metropolitan areas throughout the country.

However, it appears that this step may be taken by the FCC without first considering the extensive and serious technical problems that appear to be related to low power FM. These problems revolve around the potential for LPFM's to cause fundamental interference with the existing licensed FM stations throughout the country. This will cause major problems for WUSF in continuing to reach its listeners throughout the Tampa Bay and Sarasota region. There are times now when listeners in Pasco, Hernando, Polk and Sarasota counties have difficulty in receiving the WUSF radio signal. This in turn restricts their opportunity to learn from and enjoy the programming for which WUSF has become known.

It is important to understand that I do not write in opposition to adding a broader range of diverse voices in discussing the public agenda. After all, that has always been the reason for Public Broadcasting from its very beginnings. However, there are substantial unintended consequences that will occur if the LPFM plan being considered by the FCC is implemented. Thus, it is extraordinarily poor policy for the FCC to take action to establish low power FM until the unintended interference problems are resolved.

It is much better policy for the FCC to complete the technical studies for digital conversion and put digital radio in place. Subsequently, low power FM may be studied from the context of its effect upon the new digital radio technology. Current data do not provide assurance that low power FM and the new digital FM transmission system are compatible. It would be very poor federal policy if the FCC should take steps toward LPFM now that would in the future restrict the ability of radio to convert to the new digital world.

LPFM spectrum interference is projected to substantially harm conventional existing sub-carriers of the FM signal. For WUSF, this is where the Radio Reading Service for the print-impaired is broadcast. Interference with this signal will affect the quality of life of more than 12,000 blind and print impaired listeners throughout the Tampa Bay region.

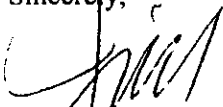
Another essential concern is that most listeners use relatively inexpensive radios, such as clock radios, to receive the FM signals from WUSF. It is essential that research demonstrate that LPFM will not increase signal interference, thus eroding the reception of the current WUSF signal for many of its listeners.

It is my understanding that Representatives Rogers of Kentucky and Tauzin of Louisiana as well as Senator Hollings of South Carolina understand and are supportive of action that would delay FCC consideration of low power FM until further research is completed and the digital transition for radio has been accomplished.

Your assistance in communicating this message to your colleagues and to the FCC will be very much appreciated.

Thanks for your continued assistance and support of Public Broadcasting throughout the Tampa Bay area.

Sincerely,



James B. Heck
General Manager

JBH:lmm